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kingdom, in the establishment of a government whose head was to be the visible representative of Jehovah. And now by God's message through Nathan this kingdom was for ever promised to the house of David. To it therefore men's hopes were now directed as the destined instrument of salvation.

But this prophecy does not speak of the Messiah as an individual; it does not predict the perfect reign of a sinless king. It contemplates a succession of kings of David's line, who would be liable to fall into sin and would need the discipline of chastisement. The perfect king in whom, as we now know, the line was to culminate, and the prophecy receive its highest fulfilment, is not yet foreshadowed.

It remained for prophet and psalmist, developing this fundamental revelation, to draw the picture of the ideal king who should spring from David's seed, and exercise dominion as the true representative of Jehovah on earth. As each human heir of David's line failed to fulfil the expectation, hope was carried forward and elevated, until He came to Whom is given the throne of His father David, and of Whose kingdom there shall be no end.

The subsequent references to this great promise should be carefully studied.

- (a) David applies it to Solomon. 1 Chr. xxii., 9, 10; xxviii., 2 ff.
- (b) Solomon claims it for himself. 1 Kgs. v., 5; 2 Chr. vi., 7 ff.; 1 Kgs. viii., 17-20.

(c) It is confirmed to Solomon. 1 Kgs. ix., 4, 5.

(d) It is repeatedly affirmed, that in spite of the sin of individual kings, the kingdom shall not be withdrawn from David's house for his sake. 1 Kgs. xi., 31-39; xv., 4, 5; 2 Kgs. viii., 18, 19.

(e) Ps. lxxxix., written no doubt in the dark days when the monarchy was already tottering to its fall, recapitulates this promise, and pleads with God that He should not suffer it to be frustrated. See especially verses 19-37. Ps. cxxxii., 11, 12, and Is. lv., 3, also contain distinct references to it.—*Kirkpatrick in Cambridge Bible for Schools, Second Samuel.*

The Will of Sennacherib.—Is it not a remarkable providence that the will of Sennacherib has been discovered? It is the oldest will in the world, and it has survived in order to corroborate the Bible narrative! For what does it reveal to us, and what light is thrown both by it and the annals of these ancient times upon this eventful story? First of all we gather from the annals that Esarhaddon was not the eldest son, and then the will reveals to us that he was his father's favorite, and was made heir to his wealth to the exclusion of his brothers. Let us read the will:

“I, Sennacherib, King of Multitudes, King of Assyria, have given chains of gold, stores of ivory, a cap of gold, other crowns and chains, besides all my riches, of which there are heaps, crystal, and other precious stones—over four hundred pounds weight—to Esarhaddon, my son, named Assurebil-mucin-pal, according to my wish: the treasures laid up in the temple of Amuk, and Nebo-irik-erba, the harpists of Nebo.”

At the time this will was made Esarhaddon was not the heir-apparent to the throne; but the terms of the document, if they do not actually constitute him successor to the kingdom, afforded strong ground for suspicion that such was his father's intention. What, then, is more probable than that favoritism, such as this, stirred up the envy and passion of the sons who had been disinherited, and led them to wreak a terrible vengeance, in their act of parricide?

And this is further borne out by the memorials which remain to us of Esarhaddon's reign. Many of these have been mutilated, and the alabaster slabs and stones on which they were inscribed have suffered much from fire; but enough remains to echo back distinctly the voices of the sacred historian. From these records we gather that before Esarhaddon could ascend the throne he had to contend for the empire with his two brothers. Their names are given as Adar-malik, and Asshur-Sharossar, plainly answering to the Adrammelech and Sharezer of the Scriptures. He met them in pitched battle upon the field of Hanni-rabbit, where he utterly defeated them, and having been proclaimed king on the spot, by the soldiery, he returned victorious to Nineveh, while they escaped into the land of Armenia, where the reigning king, Erimenas, who, as we are informed, had been at war with Assyria, would be ready to receive them as the rivals and opponents of his foeman.

An inscription of Esarhaddon's, which was found at Kouyunjik, but is unfortunately much mutilated, throws a lurid light upon this story of fraternal passion, and at the same time bears indirect but substantial testimony to the narrative given to us in the Books of Kings and Isaiah. We extract the following passages:

"... I vowed from my heart. My liver was inflamed with rage. I immediately wrote letters saying that I assumed the sovereignty of my father's house, and lifted up my hands to Assur, the Moon, the Sun, Bel, Nebo, Nergal, Ishtar of Nineveh and Ishtar of Arbela, and they accepted my prayer....

"Then, as a bird spreads its wings, so I displayed my standard, as a signal to my allies, and took the road to Nineveh with much toil, by forced marches. Getting before my troops in the hill country, their powerful warriors attacked my advance and discharged their arrows; but the terror of the gods, who are my lords, overwhelmed them, and they retreated before the valor of my army. Ishtar, queen of war and battle, stood by my side, and broke their bows and, in her rage, destroyed their line of battle, proclaiming herself to the enemy as an 'unsparing deity.'.... By her favor I planted my standards where I had intended."

The Book of Chronicles informs us that Esarhaddon conquered Manasseh king of Judah, and took him "among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon" (2 Chron. xxxiii., 11). Let us see what corroboration of this statement is furnished by the archives of Nineveh. In these a list of Esarhaddon's tributaries is recorded at full length, and the second on the list is "The king of Judah." The name of the king is lost, but there can be no doubt that it was Manasseh. All these are represented as having sent presents to Esarhaddon, and they were further directed by him to send materials for the palace which he was building at Nineveh. But the Bible account says that Manasseh was carried captive to Babylon by his conqueror. Why to Babylon? "Surely," exclaimed the critics, "it should have been 'to Nineveh,' which was Esarhaddon's capital." And they concluded that the sacred historian or his transcriber must have made a mistake. But the records of the past have more than verified the Bible version of the story. They inform us that Esarhaddon had been viceroy at Babylon during his father's lifetime; that he built there a splendid palace for his own residence; and that he there spent the best part of his life. "To Babylon," says Mr. Cooper in his *Resurrection of Assyria*, "he carried all his treasures; at Babylon he lived while life was an enjoyment to him, and at Babylon, by an edict dated in his thirty-third year, he resigned his empire into the hands of his favorite son Assur-ban-ipal II."

Devoutly thankful we should be for such accumulated evidences concerning the truth of God's holy Word. They are priceless in themselves, and invaluable as regards their use and influence ; but let us never forget that they are only meant to corroborate, and to lead us upwards to those higher evidences, which are the inheritance of him who truly belongs to Christ, and therefore " hath the witness in himself"—

"He who hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound, or doubt Him, or defy ;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side—for on this am I."

—Walsh, in *Pulpit Treasury*.

Traditions relating to Jeremiah.—1. That Jeremiah addressed a severe rebuke to the Jews in Egypt is the last undoubted fact which we possess in connection with him (chap. XLIV.; see note on ver. 1), and it has been conjectured that it was in accordance with his own desire that his faithful minister Baruch refrained from inserting in the Book of his prophecies any further particulars of his life or record of his end—so slender at the outset and even inconsistent are the traditional notices.

2. The Christian tradition was that the Jews in Egypt, provoked by his rebukes, stoned him to death. "Jeremias lapidatur" Tert. *adv. Gnost.* c. 8; "Jeremias lapidatus... a populo," Hieron. *adv. Jov.* II., 37. See also beginning of § 8 below.

3. The Jewish tradition, perhaps however invented by way of hiding the truth of the charge brought against them by the Christians, was that the prophet had escaped from Egypt to Babylon, and there died.

4. In the (Apocryphal) Book of Ecclesiasticus (chap. XLIX., 7), the date of which is very uncertain, Jeremiah is referred to thus:—"They entreated him evil, who nevertheless was a prophet, sanctified in his mother's womb, that he might root out, and afflict, and destroy ; and that he might build up also, and plant." See *Jer. I.*, 10.

5. In 2 Macc. II. 1-7 we are told that Jeremiah at the exile "commanded them that were carried away to take of the fire," and that "the prophet, being warned of God, commanded the tabernacle and the ark to go with him, as he went forth into the mountain, where Moses climbed up, and saw the heritage of God. And when Jeremy came thither, he found an hollow cave, wherein he laid the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door. And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it. Which when Jeremy perceived, he blamed them, saying, As for that place, it shall be unknown until the time that God gather his people again together, and receive them unto mercy."

6. Judas Maccabaeus before his conflict with Nicanor sees in a vision (2 Macc. xv., 12-16) "a man with grey hairs, and exceeding glorious, who was of a wonderful and excellent majesty... a lover of the brethren... Jeremias the prophet of God," who presents him with a sword of gold, by which to prevail.

7. The following is the form which the tradition had assumed in the time of Polyhistor (brought from the East to Rome by Sylla the Dictator). He is quoted by Eusebius (*Praepar. Evang.* IX., 39). In the time of Jehoiakim Jeremiah prophesied. He found the Jews sacrificing to a golden idol, named Baal, and announced the impending disaster. Jehoiakim was for burning him alive, but he said that